

IX.—A NOTE ON THE MALAYAN WILD DOG
(*CUON RUTILANS*)*(With a plate)*

That little hunter, *Cuon rutilans*, has been the subject recently of more than one article in the Society's magazine. I enclose a photograph of him taken near a bull terrier of average size.

On December 8, I saw this specimen, a solitary male, run a young sambhar stag into a pool in the Wesalun stream. Favoured by good cover I approached within 10 yards and obtained a good view of *Cuon* at work. The sambhar, very exhausted, struggled in water upto his withers with the dog fastened to his head. During the short time prior to my interference the sambhar had been twice pulled off his feet and submerged. Later examination of the body revealed a number of wounds about the head and neck and a few on the flanks. No single wound was really serious and I have little doubt that death in this instance would have resulted from drowning. There were no signs to show if attempts had been made to emasculate the sambhar.

I shot the dog. The sambhar's face and particularly the eyes had been badly torn. This fact with his evident extreme exhaustion led me, too hastily I am afraid, to shoot him also.

The sambhar bleated piteously during the struggle with the dog. The sound resembled the usual 'Tit' note prolonged into a bleat.

This is the third instance I have known of solitary wild dogs running deer in the Upper Chindwin District. The two previous occasions concerned barking deer, the remains of which I found with unmistakable signs that they had been killed by solitary dogs and not by packs.

I have often speculated on the reasons why wild dog 'kills' should invariably be found in the beds of streams. The sambhar in the instance described appeared so helpless in comparatively deep water, that I am inclined to credit *Cuon* with a deliberate intention to shepherd deer to water, or perhaps more truly with allowing deer to take to water before closing with them. I remember two instances of deer being pulled down by pariah dogs, and in neither case was the kill made near water although streams were handy. A few weeks ago I followed a slightly wounded barking deer stag with the bull terrier in the photograph. The deer did not attempt to make for water and was run into and held some distance from the nearest stream. Of some dozens of wild dog kills I have seen in Burma I do not remember to have seen one that had not been made in the bed of a stream.

One frequently speculates on the probable results of a fight between a wild dog and a domesticated one. I may remark that *Cuon* in this case showed no greater tenacity or strength of jaw than a bull terrier, and I think if this one had clashed teeth with the dog in the photograph he would have had a very thin time. But perhaps some reader could adduce evidence to the contrary.

MAWLAIK,
UPPER CHINDWIN
DISTRICT,
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